

Chapter 20 Weather Patterns and Severe Storms

Section 20.1 Air Masses


This section describes air masses and explains how they affect weather.

Reading Strategy

As you read, write a definition for each of the terms in the table. Refer to the table as you read the rest of the chapter. For more information on this Reading Strategy, see the **Reading and Study Skills** in the **Skills and Reference Handbook** at the end of your textbook.

Term	Definition
Air mass	a.
Source region	b.
Polar air mass	c.
Tropical air mass	d.
Continental air mass	e.
Maritime air mass	f.

Air Masses and Weather

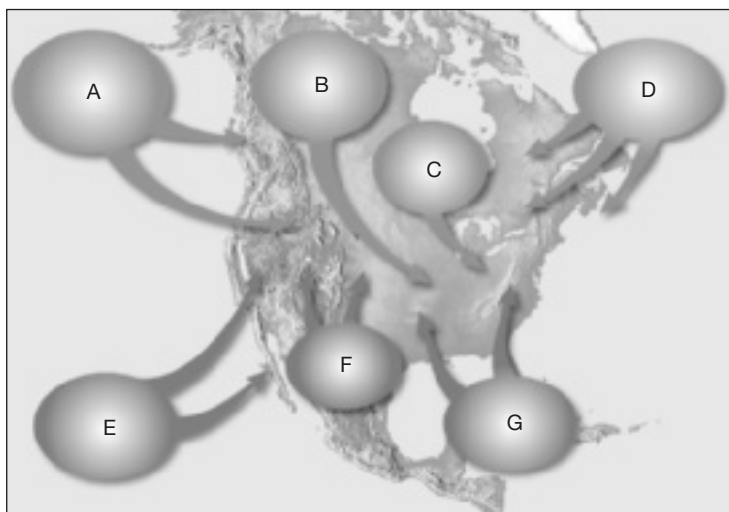
- Changes in weather patterns are often caused by movement of _____.
-  Is the following sentence true or false? As an air mass moves, its characteristics change. _____
- Circle the letter of a common size for an air mass.
 - 600 km or less across
 - 1600 km or more across
 - 16,000 km or more across
 - 160,000 km or more across

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Classifying Air Masses

4. Identify each labeled air mass on the figure as continental tropical, continental polar, maritime polar, or maritime tropical.

A. _____
 B. _____
 C. _____
 D. _____
 E. _____
 F. _____
 G. _____



5. List two characteristics used to classify air masses. _____

6. Circle the letter of the terms that describe the temperature characteristics of an air mass.
- continental and maritime
 - continental and tropical
 - polar and maritime
 - polar and tropical

Weather in North America

7. Is the following sentence true or false? Much of the weather in eastern North America is influenced by continental tropical and maritime polar air masses. _____
8. Although _____ air masses are not usually associated with heavy precipitation, they can sometimes cause lake-effect snow.
9. Circle the letter of the type of air mass that is the source of much of the precipitation that falls on the eastern United States.
- continental tropical
 - maritime tropical
 - maritime polar
 - continental polar
10. Is the following sentence true or false? In the winter, maritime polar air masses often bring rain and snow to the west coast of North America. _____
11. What causes Indian summer? _____

